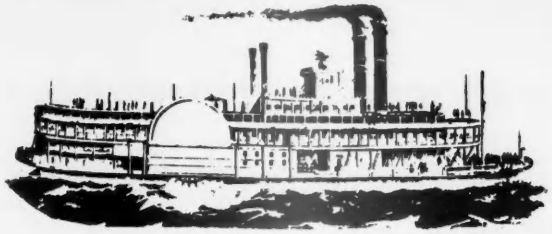


RIVER CURRENTS

SECOND COAST GUARD DISTRICT - FEBRUARY, 1980

Chief of 2nd District OSR Gets Air Medal

"There were high seas, stiff winds, and it was pitch dark. You know, all that heroic kind of stuff," grinned LCDR. John Burger, talking about the rescue for which he won the air medal.

"It was a sailboat, which made it even worse. Ordinarily, in calm wealther, you can bring a helicopter over the stern of a sailboat in such a way that only the winch and basket are directly over the boat. In heavy weather, the boat rolls enough to get the mast whipping back and forth, which is a danger to the helicopter.

"In situations like that you must move the helicopter out of danger, and throw a weighted line to the stranded sailboat. The rescue basket can then be guided to the boat, and the people removed. This system works fine for everyone but the last man aboard. To get him out of danger you have to time the swing of the sailboat's mast, then maneuver the helicopter over the boat when the mast is out of the way.

"The worst isn't over when you have the last man safely aboard the helicopter. In this case, we were flying a helicopter from the CGC COURAGEOUS, near the Bahamas. With rough seas, the cutter rolls. That means your landing platform is a moving target. It was just about the toughest mission I've flown."

RADM Norman Venzke congratulates LCDR John Burger on his air medal while LCDR Burger's wife, Nola, looks on.

For this action, the Commandant awarded LCDR Burger the air medal. The medal was presented to LCDR Burger by 2nd District Commander RADM Norman Venzke. LCDR Burger is chief of the search and rescue branch in the 2nd District.

Cream Of The Cream

There are some units in the 2nd District that can't learn from their mistakes; they haven't made any. Congratulations to the following units for receiving an outstanding or an excellent in their evaluation from the 2nd District inspection staff:

The following units received an outstanding: MSO Paducah, CGC Cheyenne, MCO Louisville, and MSO St. Louis.

The following units received an excellent:

BOSDET Mussell Shoals, ANFAC Greenville, MSO Cincinnatti, Reserve Unit Cincinnatti, Group Tennessee River, CGC Dogwood, LORAN Station Dana, CGC Obion, ANFAC Natchez, Bosdet Paducah, MSO Pittsburgh, ANFAC Sewickley, BOSDET Marietta, ANFAC Paris, MSO Huntington, Director of Auxiliary, Southern Region, Recruiting Office St. Louis.

The following units had no time lost due to automobile accidents: ANFACs: Chattanooga, Greenville, Memphis, Owensboro, Peoria, Salisaw. CUTTERS: CHEYENNE, GASCONADE, OBION, SCIOTO, SUMAC

Stations: LaMoure

MSOs: Minneapolis MSDs: Decatur, Greenville

BOSDETs: Hastings, Fort Smith, Marietta

Groups: Upper Mississippi River, Lower Mississippi River

The following units had no time lost due to injuries ANFACS: Owensboro,

Continued on next page

Cream Of The Cream Cont.

Peoria, Sallisaw Cutters: CHEYENNE Stations: LaMoure MSOs: Memphis, St. Louis.

Only one unit in the 2nd District had no personal injuries in 1979 **AND** an outstanding in its inspection report: CGC CHEYENNE.

What is the secret to CHEYENNE's success?

"Work 'em hard and treat em fair," says CHEYENNE's Officer in Charge, BMCM E. P. Owens. But that is only part of the reason for CHEYENNE's record.

"Master Chief Owens emphasizes training," said BM1 Steven Hadley. "Every morning we schedule 15-30 minutes for instruction. We have four men who graduated from the A-to-N school at Governor's Island, and we have another man there now. Our MK1 just finished caterpillar school."

"It is a total team effort out there," explained X.P.O. BMC George Obusek. "Everybody pitches in. SSs, SKs, and firemen will help work aids. This is one hard-working crew. As far as I'm concerned, it's the best crew I've served with since I've been in the Coast Guard."

BM1 Hadley confirmed this: "The snipes can run the boats or work aids, and the deckies can light off a generator. There isn't any rivalry between the divisions, as on some cutters."

"We make sure they know what they're doing before we turn 'em loose with a boat or a chain saw. We have check off sheets, and every man is individually checked out on each piece of gear before he works with it," said BMCM Owens.

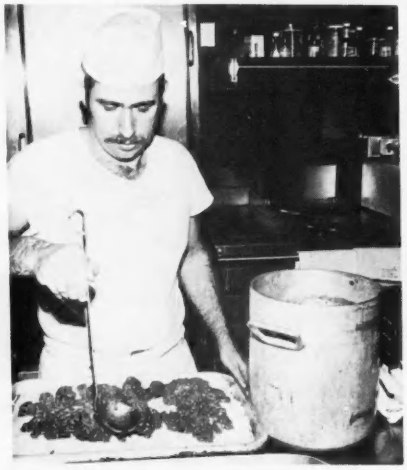
The CHEYENNE's engine room looked like something you'd find at a custom car show. "We've chrome plated some of these parts, and we're going to do more," vowed MKC Ray Standridge. A Coast Guard cutter travels on its stomach as much as its engines, and the galley's food shined as bright as one of MKC Standridge's chrome plated engine parts.

"The crew complains about having steak too often," joked SS1 James Salmon. Plans were being made to fly in live Main lobsters for that Friday's seafood dinner. Lunch for that day was lasagna, and it tasted more like a meal you'd expect to eat by candlelight in an expensive restaurant than something that came out of a ship's galley. There are things about the CHEYENNE that can't be seen in a training schedule or tasted at chow that make it a good unit. At about ten o'clock one of the deckies limped in from a visit to PHS, a frown on his face and his medical records under his arm.

"So how's your foot?" asked BMCM Owens. He and the X.P.O. dropped everything for the next ten minutes to find out about the ailing crewmember's health. The CHEYENNE has an active sports program, its crew playing hockey, football, and whatever other sports are in season every chance they get. BMCM Owens encourages the competition.

To the rivertender's loyal crew, even the best shore unit seems undesirable. SNSK Marty Pabich summed it up best. When asked what was **wrong** with the CHEYENNE, he thought for a moment and said: "We have to live on-base sometimes."

The crew of the CHEYENNE.



SS1 James Salmon prepares a mouth-watering lasagna.

BM1 Steven Hadley inspects bouy gear aboard the CHEYENNE.

FA Christian Burks cleans engine parts.

Coast Guard Team Starts Basketball Season

The 1980 basketball season has begun for the 2nd District basketball team. The 10-member team has been shooting an average of 90-points per game in pre-season play, so the games promise to be exciting. Team members come from the district office, the base and the CGC SUMAC. All games will be played in the Salvation Army Gym in Maplewood, at 7701 Rannels Street. Let's get out and support our team! Games are scheduled as follows:

1. SK3 MIKE JONES, 5'6", GUARD 2ND DISTRICT
2. YN2 ROBERT HARGROVE 5'5", GUARD CGC SUMAC
3. SK3 MILTON GOODEN, 5'8" GUARD 2ND DISTRICT, TEAM CAPTAIN
4. DC3 REGINALD WELLS, 6'0" FORWARD & GUARD BASE ST. LOUIS
5. SK3 JAMES SIMS 6'0" FORWARD BASE ST. LOUIS
6. FA COWAN BROOKS, 5'10" GUARD BASE ST. LOUIS
7. SK3 MARTY DANIEL, 6'1" FORWARD 2ND DISTRICT
8. SK2 RODERICK BROWN, 6'3" FORWARD BASE ST. LOUIS
9. HM3 BRAD REES, 6'3" FORWARD PHS FEDERAL BUILD
10. SS3 FRED TRUJILLO, 6'7" CENTER BASE ST. LOUIS

Group Upper Mississippi River, Ping-Pong Tournament

The first round of a double elimination ping-pong tournament was held at Group Upper Mississippi River 11 January in four action packed two-out-of-three sets.

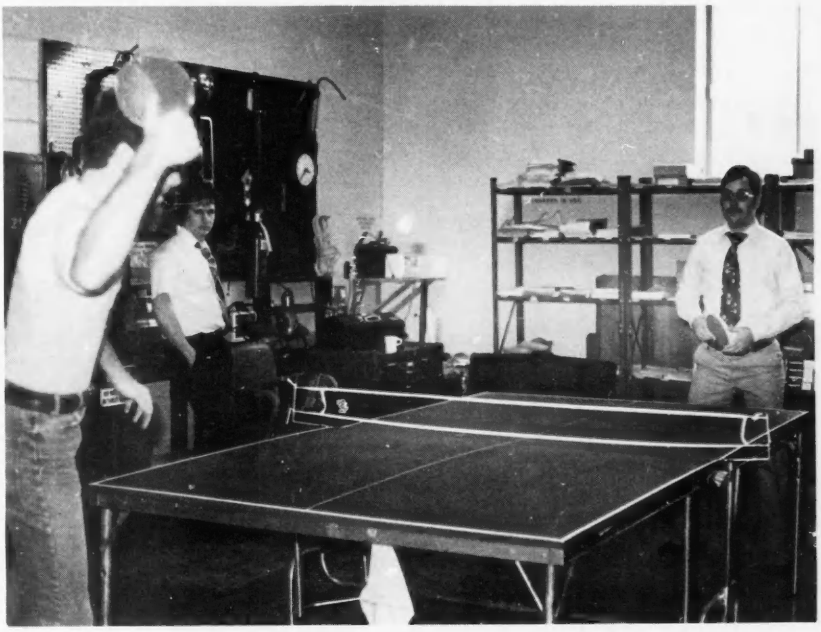
SK1 Mike Williams defeated YN2 Steve Handy in two straight games 21-18 and 21-17 using well placed returns and a top spin on the serve that proved difficult to return.

SA Doug Keck won two straight from RM3 Curtis Reynolds and RM2 David Banik overpowered RM2 Bill King 21-16 and 21-17, while RM1 Wayne Holleman played RM2 Daryl Johnson to a 1-1 tie then astounded Johnson 21-12 in the final game.

RM2 Banik, brandishing his favorite green rubber paddle promised to bury SK1 Williams, his scheduled second round opponent, while Williams promised to have the XO lock Banik's paddle in the safe. The second round of play is scheduled for 18 January.

During post-game celebration it was the general consensus that the swelled heads of the "lower Mississippi river grope" could be shrunk considerable if they should decide to accept the herewith challenge to a best-out-of-five set of volleyball. If they'll "go almost anywhere" and "play almost anybody" maybe they'll risk their reputation on us.

Photos and story by YN2 Stephen Handy



RM2 David Banik slams the ball out of sight while RM2 Bill King looks on helplessly.

(Editor's note: Because of RADM Venzke's involvement in the board of inquiry that is investigating the sinking of the CGC BLACKTHORN outside Tampa Bay, Florida, there will not be a District Commander's Corner in this issue. River Currents will continue this feature in future issues.)

An All Hands Evolution

The best things in life are free. That's the way things seemed, when approximately 100,000 informational pamphlets were distributed to the Missouri/Illinois boating public at the All Sports Show. The show was held at the Cervantes Convention Center, St. Louis, Missouri during the week of January 7-16, 1980. The literature's content ranged from proper ways to use your Marine Sanitation Device to Water 'N' Kids, (a coloring book for children).

The "Boat Show" was an all hands effort as members of the Boating Safety Division, BOSTEAM TWO, Reserve BOSDET St. Louis A and B, and Auxiliary Divisions three and seven "pitched in to man the booth." Also playing key parts were the Coast Guard Half-Boat, the BOSCEN and the lighted Boating Display.

"I could visualize what the show looked like without even being there." said CWO-3 Donald F. Thurston. Commanding Officer BOSTEAM TWO. When I worked the booth, and actually saw it for the first time, it was everything I anticipated. They really came through. "It just goes to show that money can't buy everything."

(Story and photos by PA3 Dona Frank)

Participating Auxiliarists included:

USCG Auxiliary members 02 W Division III:

Edward Meyers, Leonard Milton, Bill Kristen, Joe Flynn, Albert Krumrey, George Krumrey, Conrad E. Nichols, Ralph H. Woods, James E. Willerton, Marilyn Aten, Charles W. Aten, II, Norbert Doll, Edward Martin, John D. Staehle, Eugene Raemdonck, Bob Story, Rosemary Aten, Martin Walsh, Ruth Walsh, Forrest Moeckel, Kenneth Schwind, E. Richard Lipsinsky, Johan N. Sverdrup, Walter W. Gueck, Dale Behm, Francis Stiens, Wm H. Lang, Sr, Edna Rose Aten, C.W. Aten, Ralph Thies, Fred Wenzlburger, William Eckl.

USCG Auxiliary members 02 W Division VIII:

Carl Beller, Herb Koberman, Rich Guinn, Chug Aldwin, Bob Nisbet, Carl Guibor, Leonard Cortor, Nancy Aldwin, Charles R. Meyer, Clarence Loncaric, Frank Pulaski, Donald E. McDonald, Delbert Montgomery, Martin B. (Ben) Dehn, Nancy Aldwin.

Coast Guard Reserve Unit St. Louis "B":

BMCS W. L. Giessman, BM1 R. Golding, PS1 G. Huber, MK3 M.F. Berry, MK3 A. Oretti, RD3 J. Buchanan, SA D.E. Chute

Coast Guard Reserve Unit St. Louis "A":

BMCM R. H. Beerman, BM1 J.M. Hancock, EM1 J.J. Adams, MK2 J.F. Droppelmann, PS2 C.L. Gurney

BOSTEAM 2:

CWO3 D.F. Thurston, MK2 R.M. Ogden (Bosdet Paducah) YN3 K. H. Totten, BM3 K.C. Kohler (Bosdet Paducah)

"B" Division:

Ens. D.F. Premoe; PA3 D.R. Frank.

2nd Annual Food Drive in Owensboro

ANFAC Owensboro and Group Ohio River joined forces this Christmas to make the Second Annual Food for the Needy campaign a success. According to F. F. Lieder, Group Ohio River C.O., enough food was collected to make up twenty baskets for needy families in the Owensboro, Kentucky area. Each basket weighed fifty pounds and contained can goods, bread, and a meat center piece. This year the drive was so successful that a huge box of canned goods was given to the Wendall Foster Orphan Home as well as the area's needy families.

The drive was conducted by placing a decorated box in grocery stores, with a sign requesting donations which were then distributed by Coast Guardsmen.

A Coast Guard "Santa," MK2 Neal Kirby delivers food to needy families.

(Photo by MK2 David Stinson)

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